

Robert G. Ingersoll

A Memorial Address by Channing Severance

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

When Robert G. Ingersoll passed the debt of nature and disappeared from the hearts of men, to be seen and heard no more to the end of time, the world lost its greatest orator and one of the most remarkable men that ever trod the surface of this old earth. With his death and disappearance, one of the greatest minds, one of the gentlest and kindest natures that ever existed in human form, bid an eternal farewell to these material scenes and environments. From the mystery of life into that of death, the curtain fell upon a career with which history will insure an influence and a memory as long as history is read, or future generations take an interest in the deeds and doings of their predecessors. As the history of the world is the history of great men, there is no more doubt about his retention of a permanent place on its pages than that of the sun in the sky. A time will come when oratory will lose its charms, and the honest efforts of heart and brain to increase the joys of life and lift higher the human race in the scale of being, will pass without appreciation and approval. As long as the human heart throbs with kindness and sympathy; as long as mental freedom is prized as a blessing, and the right to think and speak freely and honestly thought is held in due regard, the name and works of Robert G. Ingersoll will hold sway and influence those who come after us. Great thoughts are endowed with immortality, and in the realms of intellect the minds of the future will, as they do today, see and recognize the same of life's possibilities.

There never lived a combination of great heart and great brain that was without power to reach beyond the grave and play a prominent part in the affairs of men, and we can no more cut loose from the influences of the past than we can under the endless chain of cause and effect. Every genius who has played his part in human affairs has left imperishable influences that will forever stimulate men to action and induce others to try and excel in accomplishments. The poets, the statesmen, the philosophers, the orators, the musicians, and the warriors have all left these influences; and the youth in every land has found his ideal force in the life of some of them, and been guided with the hope and the desire of emulation.

Under the stimulating influence of historical deeds, the human race is spurred onward, and it rises higher in the scale of existence as century follows century in the endless procession of the years. Men of genius are not every day products of Nature, and a century of time seldom produces more than one man who can count on the digits of his hand. In antiquity the world has produced but one Shakespeare, whose intellect was likened by our later genius to an "Ocean whose waves touch the shores of the world." A high compliment, indeed, and one such as no other man ever paid him, because it required an Ingersoll to produce the expression; and I now make the assertion and challenge denial with the proof, that Ingersoll's orations and his literary efforts contain more gems of thought than can be found in those of any other writer known to the world. He stands pre-eminent among all the great minds of the present and the past, as an expressive writer and an orator. His like and his equal have never been seen, and if we form our judgment from the past, never will be. There is a charm of diction and a rhythmic flow of words in all he wrote or said that can be

found nowhere else; and in addition to these, we find ever and at all times the highest grade of philosophy and a strict adherence to rationalism and common sense. The orations of Cicero and Demosthenes, heretofore considered the foremost productions of the human mind, are far from equalling those of Ingersoll's, and by these are cast into the shade. They occupy a high place in our classics, and ever will, but the pinnacle of fame is now held by the oratorical productions of the greatest champion of Free thought the world has ever seen—Robert G. Ingersoll.

As an advocate of Free thought, Ingersoll assumed a position in the realm of oratory never before occupied by the really great historical orators, for their line of thought was some specialty and their object their attainment. Politics, statesmanship and religion, science and philosophy have all had their great oratorical exponents, but in Ingersoll we see a new departure, for his plea and his purpose was to emancipate the human mind from every kind and system of mental slavery. His aim was to insure absolute free thought on every subject that interests or concerns mankind; and in a work of this kind he necessarily found religion and religious advocates his worst enemies and opponents.

Free thought and religion are naturally antagonistic. Religion is surrounded by mysteries, beyond which its devotees are forbidden to go, while Free thought sweeps aside all limitations and says there is nothing too sacred for discussion and investigation, and in the realms of intellect the minds of the future will, as they do today, see and recognize the same of life's possibilities.

Ingersoll's keynote was "Liberty," and at all times and in all places he was animated by a sincere desire to see what was selected as the title for one of his great lectures—"Liberty for Man, Woman and Child." He knew that freedom of thought was the basis of freedom to live, and that humanity with minds enslaved by creeds and religious restrictions could not be free. He pleaded for light and knowledge; for the substitution of scientific facts for systems of belief, and that felicitous expression, "The Gods," outlined his position exactly. Said he:

"Give me the storm and tempest of thought and action rather than the dead calm of ignorance and faith; banish me from the Garden of Eden when you will, but first let me eat of the tree of knowledge."

He saw how the world had been cursed with blind credulity in religion; he saw how religion and religious creeds had rested like an incubus on the minds of untold millions; he saw how the world had been enshrouded in darkness and gloom by the false and the baseless dogmas of theology; he saw that the priesthood feared of the hopes and the fears of their ignorant followers, and from the records of history he became familiar with the damnable part that religion has always played in human affairs. He saw the countless victims to religious fanaticism, who suffered torture, imprisonment and death for daring to think and have views of their own; and from reliable sources he found, as he asserted, that the world has been a fit place for a gentleman to live in but for a comparatively short time.

For a thousand years, that part of the world so unfortunate as to be dominated by Christian religion, stood in intellectual darkness, and that period of time is appropriately called the Dark Ages. It was not until the 15th century that the light of reason began to shine again through the darkness induced by Christian theology and the tyranny of Popery; and from the time of Bruno, the pion-

eer martyr of Free thought, up to the advent of Robert G. Ingersoll as its champion and defender, the conflict between science and religion was continuous.

There never has been a time when the Christian religion looked kindly on the cold facts of science, or viewed with approval the exercise of man's reason; and there never will be, for a conflict invariably results when reason and religion meet. The church fought the plurality of worlds, as taught by Bruno, the spherical form of the earth and its diurnal movement, as proclaimed by Galileo; put every possible obstruction in the way of science, and as late as the last quarter of the 19th century, condemned, denounced, and protested against the doctrine of evolution, as propounded by Charles Darwin.

Why? Because these men and their facts were not in accord with the Church of Genesis. While the church had power to suppress scientific men and their discoveries, it did so with relentless severity, and when through the general increase of intelligence that power began to wane, it still fought them in every conceivable way and with the old-time manifestation of hatred. The church doesn't want thinkers; it wants believers, for belief and not knowledge is the basis of all religions. For this reason, however, the church hates Voltaire, and yet the world has produced but two men who deserve to rank with him as public benefactors and steering friends of humanity. These two it is almost needless to say in this audience are Thomas Paine and Robert G. Ingersoll. This trinity of names ranks the highest in human history, and will ever so stand among the great thinkers of this and all other nations.

Without freedom to think and to express thoughts, there can be no intellectual growth and development, and a stationary world must be the result. But such is the ideal one of all religious and religious systems, for progress is neither wanted nor considered desirable, where inspired writings direct from God exist to guide, influence, and control the inhabitants of the earth. It is assumed by the priesthood and theologians that if God had wanted mankind to know more than the Bible reveals, that book would have contained it; therefore, it is sufficient for our needs as it is. This has been, and always will be, the fatal drawback to religion, for it anchors thought to so-called sacred writings, and says beyond the word of God we must not go.

For centuries the church and Christianity have their own way, and science, the product of man's intellectual achievements, was not permitted to bloom or blossom. The church and the universal priesthood and priests possessed the right to think and speak; and woe to him who dared to make use of their self-assumed prerogatives.

The church was so strongly opposed to science that it punished the scientist and philosopher as murderers are punished today—by death—and it did its best to prevent by imprisonment and torture the growth and spread of new ideas, and yet it poses now as the cause of the civilization we now enjoy.

But we KNOW that until science got a renewed foothold, and mankind were enlightened and benefited by its work, this world was the abode of crude superstition and dense ignorance; of cruel and barbaric notions; of merciless intolerance, and unrelenting persecutions. Science has broadened the human mind, and religion has insured toleration in opinions, but at what a fearful cost has all this been gained. To realize it we must read history and become familiar with indisputable facts; and when we do, the heart is sickened with horror by the crimes and cruelties of ancient Christians. If we go no further back than the time of Voltaire, we find the wheel and the rack in active use; and the flesh and custom of burning heretics alive was a common occurrence in the century that gave him birth. Though brought up in the bosom of the church and educated by the Jesuits, his great mind rose above the superstitions in which he lived, and his humane feelings revolted at the

crimes perpetrated by both the Catholic and Protestant churches, as strongly as he was moved by the horrors of Chinese civilization, that he resolved to devote his time and talents to the amelioration of his fellow men; and though extreme danger attended such efforts, and his work up to the day of his death was never free from it, he began and carried on a warfare on priestcraft and superstition, the influence of which has been tremendous. His genius lighted up all Europe, and he had no doubt or question as to his power to elevate the standard of civilization than any writer that preceded him from the dawn of the Christian era. He has well been called the master mind of Europe, and humanity owes him a debt of gratitude which has been denied and withheld because of prejudice, created and insured by the clergy of all sects and denominations. Christianity has covered him with falsehoods and calumny as a reward for his services to mankind, but that is the manner in which the church has always treated the benefactors of the human race. Show me the names in history of a man who advocated science and philosophy and I will show you one that still receives the condemnation of the churches.

After the great Voltaire, comes Thomas Paine as a well hated and much maligned enemy of Christian superstition, and the work which he did is all sufficient to account for the lies and enmity which the churches bestow upon him. He did much in his "Age of Reason," to know the progress from under Christian theology than any man that preceded him, and the work of Free thought received an impetus from him that was never equalled until the advent of Ingersoll. Thomas Paine used no weapon in his attack on superstition but reason, and from reason he drew all of his conclusions, and yet how the clergy hate him! As they hate him so they hate reason just as much, for it was reason that gave him his power to demolish their theological schemes and fables. No religion can stand the test of reason, and all religious systems must and do fall before its magic power. Religious faith is nothing but a mental effort to swallow what reason rejects; so the less reason one has, or the less he expects of his own mind, the more chance for faith in religion or superstition, which, by the way, are interchangeable terms, for as Hobbes, the English Free thinker, once said, "Religion is superstition in fashion, and superstition is religion out of fashion." There is no superstition known to the world that was not once in fashion, for mortal man has worshipped nearly everything from a dead cat to a world-wide belief in every absurdity his undeveloped mind could conjure up, and he would be doing the same thing now, without exception, were it not for this faculty, reason. Therefore, every man who opposes. Without reason to protect him from impostors and their tales of terror, man would still be as big a fool and as great a slave to superstition as he ever was. So it is Reason—and not Religion—that has made the world what it is today, for in the Dark Ages there were no Voltaires, no Paines, no Ingersolls, and superstition flourished without opposition.

Therefore, we must accept the undeniable conclusion that the more religion the world has the greater is human ignorance and misery, and the less it has the more intelligence and happiness do we find. Therefore, every man who combats religion and fights priestcraft is a public benefactor, for by so doing he insures progress, liberty and enjoyment for mankind in general. Therefore, did effective work along these lines, and intellectual growth was rapid and vigorous from the seeds of thought sown by him; but no great and worthy successor descended to this world-wide influence made his appearance until Robert G. Ingersoll came to the front and demonstrated the possession of brains and genius unequalled by any man in America, and in which he gave a few discourses given in the Athens of

America, sometimes called Boston, resulted in his being heralded as the rising sun across the lecture field of time; and well did he merit the compliment; and well did he preserve his reputation as the foremost orator of the world, until his eloquent lips were made voiceless by the touch of death's cold hand. As an orator, he was the phenomenon of the ages, and I repeat, his equal never lived as far as we know from the records of human speech that have been preserved. In all his numerous lectures and voluminous writings there is not a dull or prosy line. The fire of genius burns in them all, and his great mind seemed to hold an inexhaustible supply of fresh and attractive thoughts. He saw things at a glance, which required study and reflection in others, and his keen perception was fully equalled by his unrivaled powers of expression; and when America's greatest pulpit orator—Henry Ward Beecher—presented him to a New York audience in these words, he said what many thousands of his admirers and good judges of oratory still believe true:

"Now, fellow citizens, let me introduce to you a man who, I say not flatteringly, but with sincere conviction, is the most brilliant speaker of the English tongue in any land on the globe."

Col. Ingersoll's personality was also something remarkable, for the very sight of the man carried an influence that proclaimed superiority and genius, and in his presence no one failed to feel that he had met one of Nature's noblemen.

I first saw and heard him in 1876, and never shall I forget the manner in which he touched and swayed that vast audience in Music Hall, Boston, as he poured forth a volume of oratory, such as that historic city, with its long list of great men and public speakers, had never known before. It was on this occasion that he paid his compliments to the Rev. Joseph Cook, one of the most dogmatic and determined enemies of Free thought that orthodox Christianity has given us in the last generation. A man like St. Paul, who did not hesitate to lie for the glory of God, and who did knowingly, willfully and maliciously, lie about Col. Ingersoll. It was about that time that Free thinkers were being hounded and persecuted by Anthony Comstock and a coterie of bigoted Christians in this country, under a national law, defined as a statute for the suppression of vice and obscenity, but really aimed at the oppression of Free thought.

Joseph Cook had repeatedly stated in public that Col. Ingersoll was in favor of the circulation of obscene literature; so when Ingersoll came before the stage and dramatically drawing his finger across his forehead, said:

"When Joseph Cook asserted that I am in favor of the circulation of obscene literature, he wrote LIAR on the forehead of his reputation."

Never shall I forget the scene that followed, for memory preserves with great distinctness the tumultuous manifestation of approval that then occurred, and when the play was published in full his remarks the next morning, the Rev. Joseph—who now sleeps with his fathers and has quit lying—must have felt as did the man when kicked by a donkey that something had hit him.

And now while this subject is being touched, I wish to make clear the attitude of Col. Ingersoll on the subject of such literature and the so-called Comstock law for Christian lies are still in circulation, and destined to follow him for years, as they have Voltaire, Paine and other opponents of Christian superstition. To do this, his reply to a follow-up statement published in the Boston Journal, seems sufficient. Said the Journal:

"Col. Robert G. Ingersoll and others feel aggrieved because Congress in 1873 enacted a law for the suppression of obscene literature, and believing it an in-

fringement of the rights of certain citizens, and an effort to muzzle the press and conscience, petition for its repeal. When a man's conscience permits him to spread broadcast obscene literature, it is time that conscience was muzzled. The law is a terror only to evil doers."

Col. Ingersoll replied to the editor in these words:

"No one wishes for the repeal of any law for the suppression of obscene literature. For my part, I wish all such laws rigidly enforced. The only objection I have to the law of 1873 is that it has been construed to include books and pamphlets written against the religion of the day, although containing nothing that can be called obscene or impure. Certain religious fanatics, taking advantage of the word 'immoral' in the law, have claimed that all writings against what they are pleased to call orthodox religion are 'immoral,' and such books have been seized and their authors arrested. To this, and this only, I object. Your article gives me great injustice, and I ask that you will have the kindness to publish this note. From the bottom of my heart I despise the publishers of obscene literature. Below them there is no depth of filth. And I also despise those who, under the pretense of suppressing obscene literature, endeavor to prevent honest and pure men from writing and publishing honest and pure thoughts."

It is easy to understand these words, and no truthful or honest man who sees them will ever accuse Ingersoll of such a baseless charge as made by Cook and others; but all men are not truthful and honest, and while Christians hate their enemies, contraries to the teachings of Jesus, they will continue to lie and to slander them as they always have.

Without determined opposition to the Comstock law, which contained the word "immoral," every Free thought paper in the United States would have been suppressed years ago, for that was the main object in view when those laws were hurried through Congress in the last hours of its session in 1873. It was fully expected that the Truthseeker, the Boston Investigator, and other leading journals would be driven out of existence, and Comstock, that persistent enemy of Free thought, visited the printers of the Truthseeker and threatened them with arrest if they continued to publish it. He declared it his intention to institute a criminal charge against Editor Bennett because of an open letter he wrote to Jesus Christ, but the intention was not carried out when he learned that Col. Ingersoll had said he would defend him if he did. Comstock denounced the letter as a villainous and blasphemous sheet—but even if it had been, those two words have no more connection with obscenity than religion has with common sense. We have no laws to do and cannot exist. Still D. M. Bennett, the editor of the Truthseeker, was destined to endure thirteen months imprisonment, through the machinations of these foes of Free thought, and his offense was the mailing of a dry dissertation on the sexes, by E. H. Heywood, which biased and prejudiced courts on several occasions declared obscene. The book, or pamphlet, advocated more liberty in marriage, and dealt with sex questions, but did not contain a single word that could rightly be called obscene, as does the Holy Bible in many instances; and Charles Devins, then Attorney-General of the United States, declared after its perusal, that it was not an obscene book. But to the penitentiary Bennett had to go because his Free thought paper had offended the Christians. After his imprisonment, a monster petition of 50,000 names was taken to President Hayes by Col. Ingersoll, and that gentleman, after admitting the injustice of Bennett's imprisonment, promised to pardon him, but the Methodist Church, and the Rev. Dr. Hayes (Continued on page four)

BLUE GRASS BLADE

FOUNDED 1884.
By
CHARLES J. HILTON MOORE.

ad edited by him until his death.
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ton, Kentucky.

WHAT ABOUT THE BLADE?

The Blade is in receipt of a
number of communications, of
which the following from A. A.
Snow is a fair sample. Some ques-
tions are asked in these
letters that are difficult to
answer frankly. It costs us
very close to \$40 per week to
print and mail the Blade. For
two or more years it cost us, in
addition to this, the salary of an
editor of \$24 per week. Any
one who knows anything must
know there are some weekly
office expenses to pay. At no
time in ten years past have the
receipts equaled the expenditures.
Since the first of June the re-
ceipts have not been sufficient to
pay the postage on the paper. It
is easy to be seen that the Blade
is a long way from being a money
making institution. Read Mr.
Snow's letter:

"Bro. Hughes: I notice that
you make mention of your finan-
cial condition, and that you
want your friends to write you
their opinion regarding your way
out, and plans regarding the
salvation of the Blade. But
what would it take to save the
Blade? \$5—how many? Sub-
scribers—how many?

"I will be blamed if this isn't
a hard subject for me to write
on. I know of no text book or
encyclopedia to refer to for
material. A schoolman once
wanted me to write an essay
on Adair county, Mo., and I
knew no more about Adair Co.,
Mo., than the man in the moon
did—I was from Iowa. But an
essay she had to have, or my
grade would go down. Oh,
where! So I wrote a lot of fic-
tion and sent it in; but the
remedy proved worse than the
disease, for my grade went
down ten degrees below where
But she was an old maid; had
she a hubby she wouldn't have
been so cross, and would have
been more patient.

"But what about the Blade? Tell those fellows who don't
pay up or quit reading any-
thing I write. Now, I don't
know whether this is fiction or
not, but suspect it is straight
goods. There is but one or

both of two things we fellows
can do who always keep paid
up. One is: Hunt you up
some more dead beats in the
way of subscribers, or reach
down into your jeans and make
donations. We could make
promises regarding the latter;
the former would depend on
somebody else. Say, Jim, how
long would the subscribers be
sure of getting the Blade
should they pay cash on sub-
scription? As to donations, I
should think most subscribers
would want to know more
about the matter, so as to have
some idea as to what they ought
to give, and what it would ac-
complish. I should think it
well for some one who knows
all about your financial affairs
to give your subscribers a full
account of the matter. Some
letters have been sent out re-
presenting that you ask for aid
when there are no grounds for
it. This, if it had no other ef-
fect, would be inclined to make
some of your subscribers hos-
tate. I will wait to hear from
you and others. In the mean-
time, I might be lucky enough
to get a subscriber or so—not
this week, but next week, when
I will attend the Chautauqua at
Leon. Very truly—A. A.
SNOW.

There is a significant sentence
in the above: "Some letters have
been sent out representing that
you ask for aid when there are
no grounds for it."

This same authority announced
in the daily newspapers that the
Blade caused publication on the
12th of last December. This same
authority sent out letters that he
had acquired possession of the
Blade and would merge it into a
paper to be called "The Rational-
ist," January 1, 1910. This same
authority, it is believed in this
office, purloined a copy of the
Blade mailing list and sent notices
to delinquent subscribers to send
no more money to Mr. Hughes,
but to send it to "The Rational-
ist." This same authority made
advertisements to the State Inspect-
or at Frankfort that Mr. Hughes
had sold copies of a book he was
printing for the State, and subse-
quently denied that he had
made such an affidavit. The same
authority is a constant reminder
of the fable of our schoolboy days
about the boy who put a snake
into his pocket to get it warm.

The publisher of the Blade has
never, and never will, ask for
a cent of money for himself. If
the Freethinkers of this country
want the Blade, he is willing to
provide it and meet them more
than half way. It costs over
\$2,000 a year to publish the pa-
per. He is willing to scratch
around and put up half of this.
He does not think he can afford
nor does he think he ought to be
asked, to continue the paper at
a total dead loss.

Mr. Snow suggests that delin-
quents pay up. We have used
every art we know of to induce
them to do so, but without avail.
Our faith in them is weakening.

There has just been issued from
the press of the Blue Grass Blade
a little pamphlet by H. S. Hills,
of Cleveland, Ohio, entitled
"Christianity's Birthplace."

This little book of fifty-six
pages is one of the strongest con-
tributions to the Free thought lit-
erature of the year yet published.
It gives every evidence of patient
and painstaking research, and
presents a strong collation of
authorities as to the origin of the
New Testament Gospel, upon which
is founded the Christian
Religion.

The author makes no claim to
originality, but merely pretends
to have compiled accurate state-
ments. Among the many notab-
le authors quoted from are St. Au-
gustine, Bishop of Hippo; Eusebius
Cæsariensis, Taylor's Syntagma;
Origen (third century); Eusebius
Pamphilus (fourth century);
Bishop Melito of Sardis, Lydia;
Justin Martyr; Mosheim, the ec-
clesiastical historian; Dr. Nathan-
iel Lardner, the eminent English
ecclesiastic, and a number of
others. To this collection is added
biographical personalities and
incidents in the lives of St. Paul,
Origen, Eusebius and Constantine
the Great, the immortal Four
without whom, according to Til-
lemont, "Christianity would never
have come down to us."

Appended are a number of
choice extracts from ecclesiastical
writings. The volume is dedi-
cated to such a one who knows
the truth, and yet have not the time
to search it out. The price of the
book is fifteen cents, and copies
may be had by addressing

Mr. Hills, 1847 East Eighty-
Seventh Street, Cleveland, Ohio.
The Blade heartily commends
the work to the favorable consid-
eration of its readers, and in-
deals for it a large circulation.

WANTS THE BLADE JUST AS IT IS.

Here is a letter we commend to
our friends who insist on receiv-
ing and reading the Blade with-
out paying for it:

"Birmingham, Ala. Aug. 2, '10.
"James E. Hughes, Editor Blade:
"Another copy of the esteemed
Blade just received. Had begun
to fear that I would never see
another copy. Although I have
only been acquainted with it a
short time, I have already learned
to love it, and with pleasure
to the time of the week it is de-
livered to me. It is a shame for Free-
thinkers to let such a valuable
sheet to go down, and with it a
sweet old life that has been spent
in the cause of freedom. No one
who reads the Blade can truth-
fully say that it does not contain
their money's worth, and they
cannot afford to spoil their per-
sonal reputation just for the sake
of the price of the paper; and be-
sides it will give occasion for
much comment by the supersti-
tious churches over the land. They
will say that "God did it." That
shows what becomes of Liberal-
ism, etc., etc. It will be a sweet
morsel to be rolled under the
tongue of Christians for ages.
IT MUST NOT GO DOWN.

I'll contribute five dollars to-
ward the cause, although I'm a
poor man and earn the living for
my wife and children by the toil
of my own individual hands.

As for making the paper a
month, I would much rather it
remain just as it is. A month is
too long to wait for it.

Just come along, dear readers,
and let us make the Blade still a
better sheet yet, if such a thing
is possible. Remember your own
guilty conscience and personal
reputation, and don't forget that
"honesty is the best policy" al-
ways, and that "Every little bit
helps."

Why, I couldn't sleep at night
after hearing the editor of the
Blade crying for help, knowing
that I had not paid my subscrip-
tion.

"A friend in need is a friend
indeed." In attending to this
matter at once, you not only be-
friend the editor, but yourself
and children and all the world.
If we do not honor the cause of
freedom in this manner, others
will take our places and wear the
golden laurels, and our names
will pass away into oblivion.

Don't forget that "These are
the times that try men's souls."
Every one of us ought to strive
to leave a name behind when our
life ends that cannot be erased
for the immortal truth for which
the Blade stands.

Let us hear from others.
"J. MARSHALL SMITH."

DEATH OF MRS. REBECCA SMITH.

July 11, 1910, Mrs. Rebecca
Smith, of Harrison County, O.,
in her 70th year and after an ill-
ness of several months, passed in
to the eternal calm of death. She
died as she had lived—a Free-
thinker.

On the morning of July 12th,
our good friend, Mr. Geo. O. Koh-
lers, of Dennison, O., called me
by phone and requested that I
deliver the funeral address. The
time and place of funeral was set
for morning of July 13th at the
family residence, located in that
picturesque part of Harrison
county, known as Pleasant Val-
ley. After spending several hours
on the train and driving for two
hours over the hazy hills of Ohio—
those beautiful little sand hills
formed many years ago during
the glacial period—the residence
was reached. A large crowd had
gathered. The night previous
Providence had sent a heavy rain
making harvesting impossible and
the fields too wet to work, thus
enabling every one to attend the
funeral. And the large crowd
that gathered was an eloquent
testimony of the high esteem in
which the deceased was held, not
only by her Freethinker, but her
Christian friends.

On reaching the residence, all
was in readiness, and after a
little song service, I gave the ad-
dress. It was a 45 minutes' talk
and dealt with the God idea, the
belief in immortality, the eternal
punishment superstition, and the
subjects of life and death as view-
ed from the standpoint of Rational-
ism. No compromise was made,
and no insult was given to any

one. All listened attentively, and
so far as could be learned, not
very new converts remained, but
were about the substance of the
talk.

There were many present who,
no doubt, had never before at-
tended a funeral under Free-
thought auspices, and many some-
times never thought of the
matter of religion from any other
point of view than that of the
current ritual. But "Aunt Beck,"
as she deceased was familiarly
known, had long since outgrown
the doctrines of the current ritual,
and stood for the religion of rea-
son. She performed the duties of
the office of life, and was
known throughout the neighbor-
hood as a genial soul, a good
mother, a splendid wife, and an
amiable neighbor, ever ready
to lend a helping hand. She went
about wearing the smile of cheer-
fulness and bearing the torch of
reason. Through her loss, the
family loses a good mother, a
sound friend, a faithful wife,
and humanity loses a true friend.
She is survived by her husband,
Simon Smith, who, though for
eight years has been confined to
his bed, remains firm in his Free-
thought convictions. Two sons,
two daughters and three grand-
children also survive her.

Her death is also mourned by a
brother, Mr. Johnson, of Bow-
erston, O., one of the grandest old
gentlemen whom it has ever been
my pleasure to know. He is an
ardent Freethinker, and has been
far along in years, he faces the
future without a quiver.

Freethought may well be proud
of such persons as these, as their
exemplary lives stand out as the
strongest refutations that can
be made of the oft repeated slur,
that we hear Christians making.
What better evidence is needed
to prove that people do not have
to be "regenerated," nor cleansed
by the "blood?"

J. ATWOOD CULBERTSON.

WAS JESUS A MAN, or WAS HE A MYTH?

The above is a question we
should love to see answered by
every intelligent, truth-loving
person. It is one of vast impor-
tance—one that has caused a great
amount of discord and one which
has not as yet been satisfactorily
answered. For our part, we don't
think we are competent to render
a decisive answer. But we can
give our honest opinion. We be-
lieve that this man Jesus was both
man and myth. In other words,
"a myth of a man."

Remember, there is not a word
in the New Testament with the
name "Jesus" signed to it as the
author. In that case, all we can
possibly know about such a man
is what some one else has said. It
is not Jesus doing the talking—
it is "Mr. Others." Well, who is
"Others?" They are a lot of ig-
norant fishermen, tax gatherers,
etc. Jesus is said to have told
them to follow him and He told
them to follow him. This is the
best authority we can find in
support of either a Jesus or His
sayings: Now in case these wit-
nesses for Jesus had been agreed
or unanimous in what they said
about him, that would have help-
ed matters considerably; but no
two of them were ever agreed on
anything said about him. And
Jesus is made to contradict him-
self in almost every statement
he makes. For instance, he says:
"I and my Father are one." Then
right away he will say:
"My Father is greater than I."

We could fill pages with just
such contradictory statements as
the above. But we reason thus:
In case one statement of Jesus is
not true, the others are sure to
be lies, so no use in repeating
them. Then in case Jesus had
been the only mythical God the
people had set up to worship,
even that would have little bear-
ing on the case.

But go back thousands of years
before the time of Jesus, and we
find that each nation, tribe, or
division of people had its own
peculiar gods to worship; and
when it comes the turn of Jesus
he is made to do to to pattern
after them and fall in line. There
has never been any scarcity of
mythical gods from time immem-
orial and is full of them today.

People must have something to
believe in, and if it is nothing
more than a golden calf as gold
we could worship the gold all
right, but as for the god, we ask
to be excused. The mysterious
appearance claimed for Jesus is
what fooled the people; while at
the same time there is no more
mystery connected with his birth
than any other man. His claim to

divinity is what did the work.
He was an expectant neophyte,
and very new converts remained,
but were about the substance of the
talk.

There were many present who,
no doubt, had never before at-
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be made of the oft repeated slur,
that we hear Christians making.
What better evidence is needed
to prove that people do not have
to be "regenerated," nor cleansed
by the "blood?"

Neither did the world need to
be judged. It was all right, for
after God finished it, he took a
look at it and pronounced it very
good. Did Jesus suppose that he
was capable of making any im-
provement on God's Work? He
made great disagreements and set
the people to killing each other.
But Christians today are losing
faith in their leader very fast. A
few more generations and the
people will be educated clear
out of sight of the necessity of a
Savior. They will have learned
that the world is a world of sin,
and the people of the world have
been fighting and murdering each
other ever since he came.

Now in our estimation, in both
statements Jesus has over-esti-
mated his mission to this world
most fearfully. In the first place
the world did not need saving, it
was already saved; it was much
safer before he ever saw it than
at any time since, because he said
it was a world of sin, with him,
and the people of the world have
been fighting and murdering each
other ever since he came.

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other ever since he came.

JOEL M. BERRY.

MY TRIP TO ROME.

By
DR. J. B. WILSON.

The International Congress of Free-
thinkers was held in the City of Rome,
Italy, September 1st, 1909. The author
attended that Congress as the American
delegate. It is an account of travel and
personal experiences that has received
an universal encomium from press and
people. In it religious dogmas and tales
are presented with a ruthlessness exposed
while the general style is without com-
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make them known and perpetuated.
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to the address on the envelope to the
President of the Church of Humanity,
W. H. KERR, Great Bend, Kas.

WHAT THEY DID NOT OBEY.

The African king was showing me
his troop of amazons—tall, broad-
shouldered, robust-looking women, who
carried their weapons with the grim
familiarity of warriors that knew how
to use them with determined and dead-
ly effect.

"Are they brave?" I asked his maj-
esty.

"They're the bravest of the brave,"
he answered, proudly.

"And do they obey orders?" I in-
quired.

"Yes; that is, all but one order," he
said, with some hesitation.

"And do they obey that?" I pressed
him.

"Silence in ranks!" he replied in
a tone that indicated his realization of
the fact that disobedience of this or-
der was inevitable.

The Common Type.

"I suppose," said the fair summer
girl to the literary photographer
who was playing his trade at the sea-
side resort, "you are a good judge of
human nature?"

"Well," he replied, candidly, "I
have many opportunities of observing it."

"Would you mind telling me," she
continued, "what you consider the most
common type of women?"

"The tinsy, man,am," he answered
unhesitatingly. "Four for a quarter."

Kind Consideration.

Dodge—If you would save what you
pay for cigars and cigarettes you
would have a snug sum at the end of
a year.

Hodge—Very true. But think how
my children would suffer for want of
gift bands and coupons.

Not Up to Expectations.

"And why, may I ask, did you con-
sider my lecture such a flat failure?"
he had been suffering for more
than a month from insomnia, and I
thought perhaps if I was to go to hear
you I might go to sleep, but I remained
as wide awake as ever."

DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.



Mrs. K—Hear you're broken off with
Miss Kohn. Weren't your relations
pleasant?

Range—Mine were. It was her re-
lations who were doing the kicking.

Looking for it.

The harden dancer came to see;
She got a splinter in her toe.
It did not stop the giddy show,
For she could have much, don't you
know.

The Safest.

"Young man going in for fox hunt-
ing wants to know how to take the
fence without injuring himself," said
the assistant.

"Tell him to take it with a camera,"
growled the busy man, without looking
up.

Combination.

Mr. Richmug—This anti-trust busi-
ness is throwing quite a scare into our
people.

Mr. Billyuns—Yes. The boys won't
even make combination shots in the
club poolroom for fear of being in-
vestigated—Puck.

Value of Music.

Diggs—I understand that you en-
courage your son to practise on the
cornet?

Griggs—Yes. He's been playing only
two months, but today I bought the
house next door to me for one-half its
value—Smart Set Magazine.

Some Cats.

"The fur trade of the world uses
one million cat skins annually."

"I wish the fur trade would come
around some night and gather its
next year's supply from my back
fence."

In Danger.

"Those two pugilists are liable to
be arrested before they get much fur-
ther."

"For fighting?"

"No. For being loud and bolster-
ous."

Rag-Time Worms.

Mr. Dollop—Brown's an ingenious
fellow.

Miss Wollop—What's he doing now?

"He's winding the fur trade worms
to sing cocoan songs."

Not a Good Sign.

"I'm suspicious of that man. I don't
believe I'd trust him."

"Why not?"

"He brags too much about how good
he is to his wife."

JESUS IN OUR SCHOOLS.

Lineville, Iowa, July 21, '10.

State Sup't. Public Instruction, Topeka, Kansas: Dear Sir: I see there is a movement started in your state, headed by J. F. Jarrell, of Holton, Kas., to introduce the history of Jesus Christ into the public schools, and in the opinion of the St. Louis Republic, this movement, if carried out, is destined to become nation wide. Then, of course, I would have a common interest in it, though a citizen of another state.

I believe it would be a mistake to introduce the history of Jesus into our school books, and I am here giving you my reasons for such opinion in order that you may use your influence in the matter as all the facts before you seem to require. I will also send a copy of this letter to Jarrell and to the editor of the Republic, with the request that they publish the same in their papers.

I am aware that some religious people are sensitive as to what papers say regarding their religion, and these papers do not mean to offend them any more than I do; and for that reason I shall write nothing except what Mr. Jarrell and his followers can refute if he is in the right and I am in the wrong. I have been denounced by certain Kansans as "one from benighted Iowa," but I have never asked but for light, and never been opposed but by such as desire to drop the curtain. If we ever go back to the condition of the Dark Ages, it will be for the want of free criticism. The Dark Ages were born and lasted the longest of all ages, because criticism was rewarded by the martyr's stake. I believe Mr. Jarrell's movement is a step a long way backward toward the Dark Ages. It would be virtually converting our secular school into a religious institution. Supernatural religion is out of place in our schools. The people are taxed to support the schools, but taxation to support religion is wrong it is tyrannical.

Italy and Spain are now making a hard struggle to free themselves from the parochial schools. Experience has taught them that they need education regardless of the world they live in. The only argument regarding the spirit world is too speculative for practical or secular purposes.

Jesus was a God—one of the members of the Trinity. To introduce the history of a god into our schools is to teach religion. On the other hand, to ignore the fact of his being a god, would be in a great measure, to ignore his history. It would be like giving the history of a horse and yet ignoring the fact of his being a horse.

Christians are divided on that point. Now in this history could we straddle as touching the question whether Jesus was a god? If he was a god, all his greatness grew out of that fact alone.

What! Give a history of Jesus, because of the great results that followed, and then ignore the real cause of those results? The very ignoring would be an acknowledgment that the greatness of the results would not be sufficient ground to introduce the history into the schools. If we throw out all the supernatural the miraculous and all the sources obtainable for such history of Jesus, as is done in all other histories, we find not enough material left for a complete history. Renan and other Higher Critics attempted this, but found they had to appeal to their imagination for material to make a connective narrative, and this method gave great offense to the orthodox. Many who eliminated the supernatural features of what we have of the history of Jesus have grave doubts as to whether such a person ever really existed. What little remained left the question in doubt. We would like Mr. Jarrell makes a break from the very start that will offend the Jew that is taxed to support the schools and forced to send his children there, when he denounces Jesus "the Christ." There is blasphemous and rank idolatry as seen by the Jews.

There are hundreds of thousands of educated men and women, not the Freethinkers, alone, but Christians, followers of the Higher Critics, who deny the miraculous, and affirm that nature's laws are inviolable, as are the laws of mathematics, which it is claimed, is a part of nature's laws. How would Bro. Jarrell like to be taxed to support a school and be compelled to send his children where it is taught, for instance, that the multiplication table is nominally correct,

yet at any time its laws might be suspended by the gods as to nullify it? Would he not feel that he is forced to pay for being taught ignorance?

I hold as did U. S. Grant, when he said: Leave the matter of religion to the family altar, the church and the private school, supported entirely by private contributions. Keep the church and state forever separate."

Washington, Franklin, Madison, Jefferson, and other great statesmen spoke in like manner.

A. A. SNOW.

FEW COMMENTS ON THE PAINE BANQUET.

Columbus, Ohio, June 12, 1910. James E. Hughes:

Dear Sir:—While attending the 8th Thomas Paine Memorial banquet at Dennison, Ohio, June 5th, 1910, I again met George O. Roberts, and others I know to be Thinkers for themselves—commonly called Freethinkers. I have requested by some of them, especially Geo. O. Roberts to write some of my remarks for your paper.

"When ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," or a fool's paradise. For years past we, and our forefathers, have sat and listened to the preachers for our weekly rations of heaven and hell; also taught to hate and despise all others not believing as they do. In my travels I met a preacher who heard of me and while in conversation challenged me to his church on a Sunday morning. I went on one condition that I be granted ten minutes to answer him and seek his judgment. I chose Knowledge and Belief. On going to his church a sad accident occurred on the street car line a short distance from his church, as I entered the church I was seated near the pulpit, but arose and greeted the preacher saying in a loud voice so all could hear me: My friend, excuse my late arrival as I was delayed by an accident and the mangled remains of a small colored boy lies all along the front street tracks. By choice, my friend, you may believe me, but you do not know it as a fact. Now put on your hat and go out and see for yourself, whereupon you are past belief with your actual knowledge where is your actual knowledge of life, heaven and hell after death? Whereupon he said that the Holy Ghost came into all converts and furnished actual knowledge.

In my ten minutes reply I said if that is so how can you then believe a child burns its finger on the kitchen stove. Does it black-side? Also why are so many of your church members names on the blotter of State prisoners?

I answered evasively and turning to the audience said I thanked God that there was only a handful of those Freethinkers. I asked him how many did he think there was. He answered saying about a thousand all told, and at last he said he figures it to be thousands. Now my friend said I place all of these on one side of a highway and your church members and their children who have been weekly and often stuffed with religion, in and out of churches, and hell, pictured in grand panorama view, with the smell of sulphur, knocking of teeth and bitter wail arising from the bottomless pit—a constant reminder to your church members and their children who you owe place on the other side of this great highway. How many policemen, constables, sheriffs, soldiers, judges, lawyers, etc., as a vast vigilance committee are there. It is needless to say about 5000 to 1 Freethinker. It is evident they are watching church members and their children. Go to the State prisons and look at the records. Belief and faith is a farce of the Holy Ghost. Backsliders have patches on their knees but larger patches on their souls black-side! There must be some (pure blood) and (Oleomargarine) Holy Ghost. Better have the pure food or other inspection officer attend to that matter. Yours for Freethought, LEWIS W. DIEBEMER.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

Continued from page 4) whole world owes him a debt of gratitude. For his work, for his influences are world-wide in extent. There is not a land beneath the sun where his name and works have not gone, and where they have gone they have

done good; have insured progress and an increase of human happiness; have lessened the power of priestcraft, and carried hope and courage to those groping in mental darkness. His works are a beacon light to those cursed with superstition in any form; and so they ever will be while this earth is encumbered with a single priest to enslave the minds of men.

Said Ingersoll: "There is nothing nobler than to destroy the phantoms of the soul," and that for the last 25 years of his life was his special business. His work was done well and thoroughly, and the man who has his complete writings on religious and philosophical questions has an arsenal of facts with which he can defy the entire powers of darkness; he has the richest and the ripest of human thoughts and the greatest contribution to free-thought literature that any one has yet produced.

For this reason, I say: All hail to the memory of this great man, whose grand and lofty character invites our respect; whose genius and versatility invokes our regard; whose courage and candor appeals to our pride, and whose generosity and beneficence touches deeply our emotions. He saw 66 years of life and passed away much too soon, but 66 centuries will not measure the extent of his influence, for in the world's history he is destined to bear the deathless characters; and untold millions yet to come upon this sphere of action will study and admire this remarkable product of the human race; who will ever stand as an inspiration to honest manhood and those who love and seek the truth. In the niche of fame, no name will stand higher in the coming centuries than that of Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, for time will sweep away the clouds of religious bigotry that now hover over him, and reveal him as he really was—one of Nature's grandest noblemen.

The newspapers have, as usual, carefully concealed the fact that Dr. F. J. Furnival, the Shakes at the great age of eighty-five, peerless scholar, who has just died was an Agnostic. He was a devoted admirer of Shelley, and laughed at those who tried to minimize or explain away Shelley's Atheism. Some months ago the doctors told Dr. Furnival that he had but a short time to live. He accepted the news quite cheerfully, and made all preparations for the end, including a notification to his friends.

WORLD'S BEST WATCHES. Men's New Thin Model, 16 Size. Waltham: Riverside Maxi-
mum, 22 jewels, \$55; "Green-
street," 21 jewels, \$23; "River-
side," 19 jewels, \$21; "P. T. Bart-
lett," 17 jewels, \$12.50; "625," 17 jewels, \$10; 15 jewels, \$7; 12 jewels, \$6.

Elgin: "No. 156" or "162," 21 jewels, \$55; "Veritas," 23 jewels, \$30; B. W. Raymond, 19 jewels, \$21; "242," 17 jewels, \$15; "8," 7 jewels, \$6; "340" or "339," 17 jewels, \$10.

Waltham: All the above in the new Thin Model Silver-Scrub Cases. In Fay's, Crown or Deuter filled gold case, guaranteed by the manufacturers for 20 years, artistic hand chased gold, \$3, or hunting case, \$5 more. In 25 year case, \$2 more in 20 year case. In cases guaranteed for all time, screw, \$8, or hunting, \$10 more than in Silver-Scrub case. Prices of solid gold cases on application.

Every watch guaranteed fresh and new from factory (no "shopkeepers"), an accurate timekeeper, and, if well used, good for 10 years or longer. Will be kept in order for one year. I pay freight.

and for price list of Watches not listed above, Diamonds, Jewelry, Rings, Silver and Plated Ware, Optical Goods, Ring Cases and my tract, "The A-Z and the Root," free. Highest price paid for old gold.

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DOG FENNEL in THE ORIENT by Charles Chilton Moore.

When a young man the author had started out to walk through the Holy Lands on foot. Reaching Paris he gave up the journey and returned home. He made the trip by rail and boat about three years before his death. This book gives an account of what he saw and wrote numerous Christian myths. It is especially suitable for a present. Cloth bound, 500 Pages. Postpaid \$1.25. Address orders to BLUE GRASS BLADE, Lexington, Ky.

THE TRIUMPH OF DISCORD.

Of Miss Katydid and her friends in the tree. Chance to hear a mockin' bird. As sweet as it could be. Miss Katydid discover. But her voice was big an' strong so she decide dat she'll break in An' give 'em a song. Fore of mockin' bird. As sweet as it could be. De other Katydid fine in de make a groan to de An' now an' den dey chuckle In de middle of the day An' say, "I bet dat mockin' bird Wish he could sing like us!"

GREAT DANGER.



Life Insurance Doctor—Do you contemplate any enterprise involving personal risk or danger? Applicant—Yes, I'm going to discharge our cook tonight.

The Joy of Freedom.

How sweet to walk by the county jail. With stout and fearless air. How sweet to walk by the county jail And know we're not in there!

Having Her Way.

"So you are going to housekeeping as soon as you're married? I thought you had made up your mind to board." "Yes, but George is equally determined to have a house of our own." "And so you are going to keep house in order to please George?" "No, I'm going to keep house so that George will be glad to board."—Ideas.

A New Kind.

Magistrate—Officer, what is this man charged with? Constable—He's a camera fiend of the worst kind, your worship. Magistrate—But this man shouldn't have been arrested simply because he has a mania for taking pictures. Constable—Isn't that, your worship; he takes the camera.

An Advance Tip.

"Here's a communication from a lady who signs herself 'Nervous,' said the answers-to-correspondents editor. 'She wants to know how to get rid of organ grinders.' 'That her to Chicago sends them, before they begin,' suggested the horse reporter. 'Then they'll leave at the end of the first untune.'"

Frequent Passes.

"Town council met down in the hall last night," announced the old store-keeper at Bacon Ridge. "That so?" rejoined the starch drummer. "Did they pass any measures?" "Yes, a quart measure of cider was passed pretty lively all through the meeting."

Vain Regrets.

Rankin—Have you seen that estimate of what Chicago spends for cooling beverages on a hot day? It amounts to \$500,000. Fyle (doing a little figuring)—Gee! I ought to have spent twice as much as I did yesterday. I didn't get my share!

AS THEY SHOULD BE.



Phoebe—I say, parson, I see think I'd afore you gits two wid yo' congregation yo'll have ter have ah piano maker wid yo'. Parson Jones—What yo' mean by dat? Ebenezer—'Cause he could make dem square an' upright.

The Rub. "An airship to Venus?" Sounds good, but alack! It's all right to go there. But how to get back?

For Awfully. "He vows he is tired of living." "Well?" "I must restrain him from doing anything rash."

"Why restrain him? Let him go to boarding if he wants to."

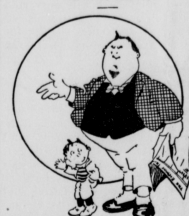
The Final Prize.

Gunner—I see where an English cigarette company is offering a tombstone for the return of 10,000 coupons. (Gunner.) I'm I guess any smoker that got away with 10,000 packs would need a tombstone.

PERPLEXITY.

All 'round about so, they say. Are friendly germs that keep away. The hostile anti-mul-cu-lae. That cause us to curl up and die. The hostile germs are everywhere. The friendly germs are here and there. That's why it makes my conscience squirm Whenever I must draw a germ. I feel that I should cry: "Who goes? One of my friends or of my foes?" And if a friendly germ it be, I ought to welcome him, you see. The hostile germs I truly hate, And they deserve a cruel fate. But I would feel regret if I Should waste a "friendly" nip and thigh.

HE WAS NEXT.



Mr. Henpeck—A king, my son, is a person whose authority is practically unlimited, whose word is law and whom everybody must obey. Willie—Then, papa, I guess mamma is a king.

A Nightmare.

Up rose a man and what he cried. He heard with startled ears. "I dreamed I took a taxi ride That lasted twenty years!"

Practise Campaigns.

"I don't know whether I ought to take you seriously or not," says the fair young thing to the gallant officer who has just proposed. "I've heard that you were engaged to ten girls last summer." "My dear, those weren't real engagements. They were just—er—sham skirmishes."—Judge.

Time to Move.

"I don't know where my next meal is coming from," whined the dusty wayfarer at the kitchen window. "Well, I can enlighten you on one point," snapped the woman in the red sunbonnet. "And what is that, mum?" "Why, it's not coming from here." And she shut the butter.

Too Much Company.

"Have you ever loved before?" asked the coy maid. "Yes," rejoined the wedding young man, "but—er—never before a chapman, two small brothers and a pet bulldog." And then she suggested a trip down the old road to see the stars.

His Comet Calculation.

"Thank de Lawd," said Brother Dekey, "it'll be seventy-five years 'fo de comet comes back!" "How old will you be at that time?" some one asked. "Well, sah," he replied, "I makes no mistake in my calculations, I'll be a hundred an' ten!"

The High-Water Mark.

Mrs. Robinson—And were you up the Rhine? Mrs. De Jones (just returned from a continental trip)—I should think so; right to the very top. What a splendid view there is from the summit!—Tit-Bits.

HARD OF HEARING.



Convict—No, I'm so hard of hearing conscience couldn't get a word with me with a ten-foot megaphone.

Summary.

The pretty girl now sheds her duds. Or all of them she cast. And for each garment she leaves off she sends a card of tan.

A Bow or a Row.

Casey—Next time Ol pass wid a lady, Mulligan, ye'll take off yer hat. Mulligan—An' suppose Ol refuse? Casey—Then, be hivin', ye'll take off yer coat.

The Only Way.

Her Brother—What is the best way to win a woman's love? His Sister—Her way, of course.

THEN HE STOOD DOWN.

The witness looked youthful, and appeared to be rather uncomfortable too. Consequently, counsel assumed his most imposing manner. "You describe yourself as a writer?" he began. "What kind of a writer? A sign writer?" "No, sir." "Not an author?" "Partly, sir." "What do you mean by 'partly'?" "I'm in father's office, sir. He's a money-lender, and I'm the author of all the sharp letters to backward borrowers. If you remember, I sent you one last week, sir."

The Spirit of Aggression.

Raffinence—The Turkey Trot Tribune user be such a mild, conservative sort of paper, but I notice lately that the editor takes the ground that the United States can lick Germany, Japan and England combined, and jest does not let sail in. Backlogs—Yes, Turkey Trot's been dry for years, but jest voted wet a couple of months ago. I tell ye, the press is a pretty reliable mirror of public opinion.—Puck.

Another Fable.

"Did you see the lightning calculator in the side show?" asked the old farmer in the wide straw hat. "By heck, yes," drawled the other ruffian, "and he was the biggest fable in the show." "How was that?" "Why, there was a thunderstorm going on while I was in the tent and when I asked him if he could calculate where the lightning was going to strike he just gave me the laugh."

Speaking From Experience.

There was a family reunion down at the South house and little Tommy Smith had been kissed by no less than seven aunts. "Gee whizz!" he pouted as he took refuge in the cellar, "der's no doubt about it." "No doubt about what?" asked his chum. "Why, that this aunty-kissing business is a nuisance."

UP-TO-DATE STORE.



Salesman (absently)—The exchange department is three aisles over.

A Simile.

How like the tad see wares Is our little vacation stroke! We roll in with a mighty bluff And so get broke.

The Bargain Instinct.

Tonight when Miss Rockwell is engaged to the dukes. Do you think it was a case of love on her part? Jack—No, it's another case of the feminine bargain instinct. The duke's first figures were \$200,000, but he dropped to \$198,000.

More Appropriate.

"What name?" asked the police magistrate, as the rich motorist was brought up for speeding. "John Doe," laughed the offender, "and I am a millionaire." "You are, eh? Then I'll put it down 'John Dough.'"

Conditions.

Tapesca—I suppose you'll spend the season in Europe among the big bugs? Ticker—Unless the market changes I'll be more likely to spend it out in Yaphank among the potato bugs.—Puck.

Uncle Eben's Philosophy.

"I knows a man," says Uncle Eben, "dat says he loves nature, but he never goes out in de woods without a shotgun. Dat's de way some folks loves deir neighbors."

Trying a Bluff.

"See here, John. While unpacking your last summer's suit I found a blond hair on the coat." "Well, weren't you a blonde last summer?"

Theory vs. Practice.

Singleton—Do you believe in the old adage about marrying in haste and repenting at leisure? Weddery—No, I don't. After a man marries he has no leisure.

Keeping His Word.

"Mr. Dustin Stax said he was going to retire with a fortune." "He has kept his word," he was going to sleep he puts his wallet and his checkbook under his pillow."

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL

(Continued from page 1)
and this week man reversed himself and broke his word. This was a case of religious persecution as that of the Italian philosopher, Vanni, in the 17th century, who had his tongue cut out and was then strangled to death by the Christians of that period; but the world had become more civilized when these 17th century Christians got after Bennett; so the worst they could do was to take away his liberty. And this leads me to remark that Christianity never did nor never will cease to persecute their opponents when in power. But did you ever hear of a Freethinker who wanted to kill or imprison a person that did not think as he did? I never did; and in this fact you see the difference between the influence of Christianity and freethought on men's minds. Intolerance slumbers in every creed, dogma and profession of faith, and there like a coiled serpent it lies, ready to spring upon the unbeliever when conditions are favorable. There is no love, mercy or forgiveness in religious fanaticism. It exacts belief, obedience and submission and woe to him who rebels with it. It has power to punish! And what is the reason for all this? It is found in the fact that every devotee to religion thinks he knows the will and wishes of God, and it is his duty to regulate the belief and conduct of his fellow men that they will accord with God's desires. In an effort to please his phantom, or imaginary God, lies the secret and the basis of the persecutions, imprisonments, bloodshed, torture and destruction of life that has attended the march of Christianity through 19 centuries of time. When mortal man goes into partnership with God and tries to run the world as his thinks God wants it run, then liberty to think, to speak, to write becomes a crime, and suppression is demanded.

While religious freedom is greater today than the world ever saw it before, that fact is not due to any inherent change in religion itself, but to the divisions and subdivisions of its forces and its decreased power of influence. As religion loses power through the increase of sects, mental forces find more freedom to act, and men better opportunities to break away from the errors of the past. As intelligence increases, religion decreases; and this rule is not only invariable, but universal. You have only to find a community with a low order of intelligence to find a stronghold of religion; for people who do not think and reason, study and reflect, fall ready victims to superstition in some form; and even in localities where general intelligence does prevail, we find many who are in bondage to religious authority, and who receive their opinions ready made instead of producing their own.

"I have met," says a brilliant writer and keen observer, "hundreds of shrewd business men who are still the slaves of the church. They have not time for reflection. I have struck miners, bold, resolute and adventurous, who obeyed the priest." And so we see it everywhere, for men who do not or will not ponder and reflect on every form and phase of religious thought, must and will be enslaved by those they blindly follow. And this fact leads up to the question: What is thought for, if not to use? And why should any man relegate to another his natural right to think and form his own opinions? Why should any man accept a creed that compels him to travel in a circle all his days? Why bind himself to the errors of the past, and ignore the living truths of the present? Why shut his eyes and close his ears to any fact that comes his way? He does so because of prejudice engendered by false teachings, and religion has always been engendered in that business.

To religion, and religion alone, is due the failure of millions to think and reason clearly on all subjects. Men come into the world under its influence in some form, and are brought up to believe they cannot doubt or question certain things without endangering their future happiness, and right here is seen the basis of that stupidity which characterizes the deeply religious. They do not think, and so through this world enslaved by erroneous ideas, their phantom God is ever before them with his exactions and demands, and a mistaken sense of duty impels them to pray

and to indulge in senseless ceremonies. Fear sits on the dome of thought and directs mental action, and for this reason, if there were no other, all religions are a curse and a damage to the human race. No man can be mentally free who has any kind or form of religion, for its very first effect is to limit the scope of thought through apprehension of incurring God's wrath. It makes mental cowardice to start with, and such are no more fit to deal with science and philosophy and the relations which we as human beings sustain to Nature, than are those born deficient in sense and reason.

Any intellect that is perverted or handicapped by religious influences is deserving of pity, for it is a great misfortune, to say the least.

However, the human race as a whole, is fast rising above the fogs of fear and superstition and into the clear sunlight of reason; but workers are still needed to advance the movement and to quicken the development of general intelligence. For the priesthood is striving just as hard as ever to hold the world back and to keep the minds of its victims in a state of easy stupidity. But when we consider the great changes in the last thirty years there is much room for hope regarding the future. No man ever lived who saw greater changes in his life time than Robert G. Ingersoll saw along the lines of religious belief, and no man ever did more to make possible the tremendous upheaval of religious thoughts and the great years just mentioned than did this great advocate of light and knowledge.

The importance of Ingersoll's work in the realms of Freethought is beyond estimate, and his work is still in progress, though he is no longer with us for the art of printing makes possible its continuation and perpetuity. Men will read Ingersoll as long as Shakespeare, and no man ever read his thoughts and sentiments with so much interest and reason that his style is clearer and more easily understood. Ingersoll, like Paine, had the happy faculty of being able to reach the common people, and both these men did in a manner never reached or excelled by any other great man.

While dealing with the greatest questions that concern mankind, Ingersoll was ever so natural and simple. His style was easy, natural and attractive, and his words could be made to reveal ideas with perfect clearness, he never failed to make them. There is no trace of pedantry in anything he wrote or said. He left that style of expression to the priest-hood and those who make a specialty of deceiving their fellow-men. He was honest and sincere at all times, and what he said he really thought and meant. There was a high and lofty purpose in all he said or did, for to do good and make the world better than he found it, was the object that impelled him. His gentle nature drew men unto him as the magnet draws the steel, and his great heart was the abode of love, good will and sympathy for all mankind; and because of such a nature and the reason for his constant warfare on superstition and other evils that detract from human happiness and tend to fill the world with woe. He could not remain silent while religious fakes and frauds reigned the public mind and perverted the reasoning faculties with their hoary-headed superstitions, though he had done so, there is no doubt he could have reached the highest political position in the land. But for his unbelief in the Christian religion, the Governorship of Illinois would beyond question have been his. When his candidacy was considered, no other objection was made to his ability, but he was not and could not be questioned. But the moment an unbeliever is mentioned for political preferment that moment religious bigotry begins its customary work of creating prejudice and on prejudice and its diffusion is built the main hope of defeat. Anything that will detract from a man's character and standing is used to his disadvantage, whether true or false, and no one can descend to a lower depth of meanness than a Christian working to defeat an unbeliever for a political office. For some reason, it is impossible for such people to be honest and just in their treatment of one who rejects their hell-fire religion; and while mere belief is considered a virtue that surpasses principle and conduct, such will ever be the case.

Try as they would, and as they did, the Christian opponents of Col. Ingersoll were never able to stultify a serious mental defect in the man. His life was a model one, both in his domestic and public relations, and those who knew him best admit all this. Said the Mayor of Peoria, the former home of Ingersoll, when rebuking a slanderer: "While differing from myself and many others in politics, and having independent views on religion, which he fearlessly expressed, we Peorians hold his name and fame as something to be cherished, and I consider his life a blessing and a sunshine on the highway of life."

No one who truly knew him could feel otherwise, for the genial, generous, broad-minded and sympathetic Bob Ingersoll came nearest to being an ideal man of any that friends or foes can mention.

Said he: "Good nature is the cheapest commodity in the world, and love is the only thing that will pay ten per cent to borrower and lender both. Happiness is the legal tender of the soul. Joy is wealth," and by these principles his whole life was shaped and influenced. The place to be happy is here—the time is now, and in his life-long motto; and in this view of existence he differed from the Christian who expects the most and the best in some other world. Though, strange to say, none of them have the least anxiety to leave this world and enter into what is known as the eternal joys of the next. Their real attitude in this matter has been correctly put in rhyme, and these words express it:

"You can talk about the glories of a home beyond the skies: of a clime that is supernal, Where the land of rapture lies: You can talk about the beauties of a grand, eternal home;— But I want to murmur gently: I have no desire to roam."

In spite of belief, that person is yet to be found who is in any hurry to exchange the real joys of this world for the imaginary ones of another. So inconsistency must ever stand as a Christian trait. If Christianity presented nothing but imaginary joys to the people, we might tolerate it as a pleasing delusion, but when it sends more people to its fabled joys than to its imaginary heaven, the character of such a religion becomes uninviting, and we want it not.

A story was in circulation at one time that Col. Ingersoll's hatred of orthodox Christianity was due to the harshness of his father's character, for the clergy professed inability to see any other good cause for his enmity toward their sacred, but hellish, superstition, and this story necessitated a letter from him which is here reproduced:

"The story that the unkindness of my father drove me into infidelity is simply an orthodox lie. The bigots, unable to meet my arguments, are endeavoring to dig open the grave and calumniate the dead. This they are willing to do in defense of their in-

famous dogmas. I was not driven by the unkindness of my father to hate a God who would order, according to the Old Testament, the sweet bodies of women to be ripped open by the sword. My father was a kind and loving man. He loved his children tenderly and intensely. There was no sacrifice he would not and did not gladly make for them. He had one misfortune, and that was his religion. He believed the Bible, and in the shadow of that frightful book he passed his life. He believed in the truth of its horrors, and for years, thinking of the fate of the human race, his eyes were filled with tears. Seeing the effect upon him—seeing that religion simply made men unhappy, I learned to hate what is generally known as orthodox religion. I abhor the outrageous cruelties and horrors described in the Old Testament, perpetrated, as it alleges, by the command of God. I abhor the threatnings in the New Testament. I utterly despise the doctrine of total depravity and eternal punishment. I hate any book that teaches these doctrines. I hate any God that writes such a book. I hate these things because I have a brain and a heart. I hate them because they are infamously and heartlessly, and brazenly false, cowardly and infamous. My father was infinitely better than the God he worshipped—ininitely better than the religion he preached. And these stories about his unkindness are maliciously untrue. The bigots of today are willing to slander him in order to get even with me. Can anything exceed the arrogance of humility and the malice of universal forgiveness?"

From this letter we see why the man who believed in happiness and joy was an uncompromising opponent of the orthodox religion. It was because happiness and joy cannot be built upon it, nor experienced "in the shadow of that frightful book"—the Bible—if one sincerely believes it. This is the conclusion of every rational man, and all such feel to fight and oppose such barriers to life's enjoyment.

What a picture Ingersoll draws of his kind and loving father, whose mind was filled with unhappy thoughts, and his eyes with tears, because he believed the Bible and the Christian religion. All his days he carried this burden, and was tormented with that he now knew were groundless fears and baseless troubles. But to him they were real, and his sympathetic nature was harrowed with the thought that eternal punishment was to be the fate of millions of his fellow men. Such is the power of belief; hence every man's duty who knows it is to fight and destroy such doctrines.

I stood by the bedside of an old man recently who suffered more than words can express with hallucinations. I sought to comfort him and lessen his sufferings by telling him they were not real, but imaginary,—that his brain was abnormal in its action, when he put to me this question: "Which has power to pro-

duce the greatest misery—Reality or Imagination?" I had to confess that the power of each was about equal; and as he declared he could not escape the feeling that his sufferings were real and he could throw them off. I still think so.

The elder Ingersoll was afflicted with Bible beliefs that were as bad as this man's hallucinations, and both cases, while slightly different, were much alike. The imagination was reached in some manner, not exactly clear in the case of this old gentleman, and the brain acted without volition or the controlling influence of reason. With Ingersoll's father, the imagination was reached and controlled by Bible falsehoods, and both these men endured what might be termed an intellectual nightmare.

Reason could not reach one and give relief, but it could the other; so when Robert G. Ingersoll began to disseminate reason and common sense as an antidote for the horrors and the foolish superstition of Christianity, he began one of the most important works to which a man ever devoted his time and attention. Think for a moment of the mental agony and the misery without end that has followed in the wake of Christianity! Who can estimate the tremendous volume that has rolled over and engulfed the human race in the last 1900 years? Fear, gloom, misery and insanity are the natural products of the beautiful doctrine of total depravity and endless punishment; but thanks to Bob Ingersoll, to Paine and to Voltaire, the world has found great relief and the value of reason is becoming more and more apparent. The world is changed in proportion as thought changes, and the man who gives to the world better and brighter thoughts, who by the power of mind, raises the scale of intellectual development, is a public benefactor. Such a man was Robert G. Ingersoll, and the

Continued on page 3.

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